

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
Information Bulletin #966



The Engineering Inspection Process

Commonly Asked Questions

When do I call for an inspection?

All Inspections:

Work must be complete, pretested and ready. If a plan review letter was generated, all items listed on the letter must be resolved before calling for an inspection. A copy of the approved plans and a copy of the plan review letter must be at the job site at the time of inspection.

Fire Alarm:

Before calling for inspection the electrical permit must be signed off by the Department of Construction and Land Use and the system must be pretested. This includes all auxiliary equipment and the fire alarm controls. All carpeting, ceiling tile, drywall and doors must be in place to conduct alarm audibility tests.

Underground Cover:

Underground pipe inspection must occur prior to covering. All tie rodding, etc. must be complete and coated with bituminous or other acceptable corrosion retarding material. Tie in with the city and the building is not necessary. Inspection of thrust blocks may occur during or after pouring. Depth and width of the block must be exposed for measurement.

Underground Hydro:

Underground may be covered if cover inspection has occurred, however, pressure drops must be within allowable limits. Hydro must occur prior to connection with the building or the City. If testing against City check valves, a "frying pan" must be installed.

Underground Flush:

Inspection must occur prior to connecting with the building system.

Sprinkler Cover:

You must call for cover inspections prior to installation of drywall or tiles that would interfere with visual access.

Elevator Inspections:

Inspection should not be requested until the electrical and elevator permits have been signed off and the fire alarm system is completely installed.

Whom do I call to request an inspection?

Inspection requests are made by calling 386-1443 or you may call the inspector assigned to your area of the City, if you know their name and/or number. All systems which require a functional test must be pretested prior to the inspection appointment date.

What information do I give when I call to request an inspection?

Your name, your company, your phone number, the inspection address, the Seattle Fire Department Certification Number of the installer/tester who will be present during the test, the Seattle Fire Department Plan Review Number, the type of inspection, and the number of devices to be tested.

How soon after I call can I expect my inspection?

Short time delays of two or more days may occur, due to the availability of inspectors. Overtime inspections, available for a fee, may be requested and will be filled as inspectors are available. Careful adherence to the procedures

outlined in this bulletin will reduce the likelihood of a delay.

**Must I be present when the inspector comes?
Do I need approved plans on site?**

A representative capable of performing the required tests, capable of providing access to inspection areas, and certified by the Seattle Fire Department must be present. This person must have a copy of the approved plans and a copy of the plan review letter.

If I need to talk to my inspector, when can he/she be reached?

Scheduling of appointments is done between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM, Monday through Friday. Messages for inspectors may be left between 7:00 AM and 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday, at 386-1443. Inspectors will return calls when in the office.

What do I do if I have a code related question during the day when an inspector is not available?

The Lieutenant of Engineering, or a Fire Protection Engineer, are available during the day to answer specific questions related to the Seattle Fire Code. They may be contacted at 386-1443. Note: It is acceptable to call Plan Review Engineers with Fire Code-related questions, but please do not call them regarding field inspection problems.

What will happen if my system fails to pass inspection?

All systems must be pretested to prove they work correctly *before* engineering inspectors perform their inspection. If a system fails to pass the original inspection, a fee will be invoiced for all subsequent reinspections. Invoiced fees reflect actual time required for the inspection, to include office and travel time for inspectors (two hours minimum).

What do I do if I do not understand the required corrections?

You may contact your assigned inspector directly or at 386-1443 for any explanation or clarification which may be necessary.

When can I occupy or use my structure?

Occupancy and use of the structure is permitted only after approval of the Department of Construction and Land Use. You are in violation if you occupy the premises prior to obtaining this approval. The Fire Department considers occupancy to occur when non-construction employees or people begin working in or using the structure. Occupancy also occurs when nonpermanent mounted stock or furnishings are moved into the building.

If I contract with a builder for the construction, who is responsible to call for inspections and final occupancy approval?

The legal owner is responsible to call for inspections and approvals. If you want your builder to assume this responsibility, this should be specified within your contract, but you should check your permit and make sure final approval to occupy has been given prior to moving into the building. Normally, the installing company schedules the inspection appointment for their installation.

When can I request approval to occupy my building?

When the fire protection systems are approved and inspected and the exit ways are completed.
